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ABSTRACT

Do textbooks matter in an ever-changing field of broadcast journalism? Are some teaching materials irrelevant or out of touch with equipment needs, or lack thereof, at small institutions? Noting that these questions need to be considered when evaluating broadcast or mass communication writing and production textbooks by national companies, this paper discusses the process of reviewing new college textbooks in the field of mass communication. The paper presents review questionnaires for two different textbooks, one an introductory text in mass communication and the other a research methods textbook. It contains questions for each text, along with the evaluator's responses, followed by academic course syllabi in which the two textbooks in question could be incorporated at Southern Arkansas University. (NKA)

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ED 432 790

Kentucky Communication Association Convention
September 17-18, 1999
Cumberland Falls State Resort Park
Corbin, Kentucky

"Textbook Utilization in a Broadcast Journalism Emphasis."

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CS 510 108

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J. Reppert
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

Do textbooks matter in an ever-changing field of broadcast journalism? Are some teaching materials irrelevant or out of touch with equipment needs, or lack thereof, at small institutions? These are two of the questions I consider when asked to evaluate broadcast or mass communication writing and production textbooks by national publishing companies. Answers to the above questions often depend upon factors other than the quality of materials I am asked to critique.

Southern Arkansas University has a strong mass communication program. Its broadcast journalism emphasis has graduated the most students in the Department of Theatre and Mass Communication on a consistent basis since 1987-88, my first year as an instructor. There is a $3,000 yearly budget for broadcast supplies and services. Working in professional television and radio studios, students produce news and interview programs available to southwest Arkansas and northeast Texas households.

Such student success in broadcast journalism courses has largely been accomplished without the use of textbooks. Videotapes, audiocassettes, the Internet, previous student

term papers and broadcast scripts are often the best teaching tools. A number of broadcast production textbooks feature sophisticated and expensive equipment that our institution can neither afford nor justify due to smaller class sizes. It is difficult for me to give good reason for the necessity of a student buying a new text, often $50 and higher, when many of its principles are not specifically applicable to the SAU broadcast journalism emphasis.

I have evaluated about a dozen editions of broadcast, mass communication and speech textbooks since 1990. When critiquing broadcast texts, I make many of the points addressed above. More general mass communication texts are a different matter. Historical concepts, minority role models and research techniques are just some factors in the development of my students as media analysts. Here, textbooks play an important role in my introductory and advanced research courses.

This summer, I had an opportunity to evaluate two separate textbooks by the same publisher. One was a manuscript for a new Introduction to Mass Communication

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text, while the other dealt with Research Methods in the field. For the most part, writing and analytical quality in each was commendable. I could see both textbooks dovetailing nicely into similar courses of mine at Southern Arkansas University.

Many professors have not had an opportunity to either review textbooks or see the types of questions publishing companies ask of reviewers. What follows are questions, along with my responses, from the two mass communication texts reviewed this summer. Following each review are academic course syllabi in which these textbooks could be incorporated at Southern Arkansas University.

So, do textbooks matter in a higher education broadcast journalism emphasis? My opinion is that it is totally situational. What works for me at a small, regional state-supported institution likely differs from other broadcast journalism or mass communication professors. I envision a day when many textbooks are Web-based. Benefits would include continual updating of material, lower production costs for publishers, and most importantly, lower prices for cash-strapped students.

"Media: An Introductory Survey" (1st edition)
Review Questionnaire, Chapters 9-11
Part I: General Information

1. About the course. My course is titled MCOM 1003/Introduction to Mass Communication. Approximately 25-30 students are enrolled in the course, which is offered each fall semester at Southern Arkansas University. My goals include making students more media-savvy and understanding the many types of media messages that are fighting to gain their attention. The course consists of four exams (based on lecture, text, class discussion, outside readings/including student subscriptions to Time magazine), four five-page term papers on varying media issues, four media quizzes (based on what is happening in the news, often skewed towards media events) and attendance class participation. Each exam is worth 50 points, each term paper is worth 50 points, each media quiz is worth 50 points, and 40 points maximum are earned for attendance/class participation, making for a semester total of 500 points. Regarding important issues, right now I would highlight television and the Internet as two crucial areas which receive a great deal of attention in the course.

2. Text in use. I have used the Biagi text since Fall 1988, the first semester it came on the market and also the semester in which I taught the MCOM 1003/Introduction to Mass Communication course at SAU. For the past few years, I have looked to make a change, but have not seen anything I really liked. Vivian was interesting, I recall him in particular because of a comment he had written pertaining to Rush Limbaugh, who criticized him for it. From the three chapters I have read for the review, Longman's effort may make me make a change. What has concerned me about Biagi's text is she or the publisher have been slow to use the Internet, or a comprehensive chapter dealing with Interactive Communication, as text material. Beginning in Fall 1997, I sent out via E-mail Internet links either specifically or tangentially dealing with all of my courses. Biagi's text has done little in this regard. Now more than ever, texts can be quickly outdated without constant revisions.

3. About the market. I think most textbooks address student needs. It is often a matter of individual preferences by professors as to how they teach certain courses. For instance, I teach out of the same texts students use, and assiduously avoid any "Instructor Guides" because they have been of little benefit to me. I do believe, as someone whose

expertise is television production/videotape editing, etc. that the visual element is essential for students to comprehend information more easily in courses, including Introduction to Mass Communication. So I would be in favor of a significant amount of boxed material and graphics. I also like the idea of utilizing short clips of videotape whenever appropriate to the subject matter. Obvious clips, such as the introduction of CNN by Ted Turner at a press conference in 1980, footage of the New Coke fiasco in 1985, the roll-out of the Ford Edsel in the late 1950s, or VNR footage of Nayirah detailing how she allegedly saw Iraqi soldiers throwing babies out of hospital incubators in Kuwait City, should be incorporated into ancillary text materials.

Part II: Table of Contents and Approach of Book

4. Table of contents. The table of contents for all chapters is appropriate and thorough. When I discuss chapter contents with students, I rarely refer to them and dig right into the subject matter. I do not believe any substantive area is missing from Table of Contents coverage. The sequence of chapters is appropriate to my course. Most professors I talk to at regional and national conventions of professional organizations will mix, match, or switch around chapters in their courses, again depending on their individual instructional approaches, or particular outside assignments students may be asked to perform. Biagi does not go into as much detail (certainly fewer fresh examples) than what I have read in the Internet, Public Relations and Advertising chapters.

5. Approach. I like the survey approach, and it certainly can be used to make professors consider switching from their current texts. It is not exactly the way I teach my course, but my instructional style in any given course varies from semester to semester, to keep my ideas and those imparted in text and lecture fresh. I particularly enjoy the writing style of the text, starting with preview questions. It immediately lays the groundwork for substantive class discussion on media topics, hopefully spurring students to conduct outside Web searches for term papers or special projects.

Part III: Chapter-by-Chapter Evaluation

6. Internet Coverage. The ESPN URL is incorrect, as it now is part of the GO Network. How can Monica Lewinsky's last name be misspelled ("Lewinski") after the events of 1998? The last sentence of the first paragraph of page 5 is hyperbolic conjecture. Matt Drudge calls himself a "citizen journalist", while the author refers to him as a "scandalmonger". This material is mean-spirited and gives Drudge too much credit. In fact, Michael Isikoff of *Newsweek* broke the story. Drudge only reported it on his Web site. When the chapter deals with Internet facts in a quantitative manner (history, terms, etc.), it is well-written with outstanding coverage of virtually all issues

students would need to know. The qualitative statements, some listed above, are problematic and very judgmental. Also have somebody check spellings. Topic coverage is adequate with excellent information on E-Commerce, for example.

Advertising Coverage. Yes, it is very well-written. I particularly like fresh approaches to the subject, such as "Current Trends" and the section discussing Heroin Chic. The demographic perspective on radio advertising is something some texts fail to address. Again, the topics as selected are fine. I might add a section on racial advertising and stereotypical controversies that have happened in the past, such as depictions of Aunt Jemima, Uncle Ben, "Darkie" toothpaste, the Frito Bandito, the Old Milwaukee beer Swedish Bikini team, "Uptown" malt liquor targeted to urban youth, to name a few examples. Students also need to know about test markets, where products are advertised to see if a wider rollout would be successful. In the late 1970s, Minneapolis, a popular test market, featured television advertisements for "Choco Chill", a chocolate flavored Kool-Aid type powdered drink mix, McDonald's "McFeast" half-pound burger, and Mr. Coffee filter tea blend, making tea in the coffee maker. McDonald's has also test-marketed "Shanghai McNuggets", complete with chopsticks and oriental dipping sauces.

Public Relations Coverage. Very thorough, as I learned things I was unaware of (such as the 1929 Golden Jubilee organized by Bernays for the anniversary of Edison's light bulb. I really have no problems with this chapter in terms of coverage. My students often are given assignments where they are asked to gain media attention in some fashion. There are innumerable examples of Public Relations strategies or publicity stunts that could be utilized in the chapter. Those included are fine.

7. Coverage, All Chapters. There are a few instances where I might rewrite sentences or rearrange clauses (such as mentioned above). For the most part, however, I found the chapters to be a breezy, fun, informative read. Instituting Web links within the context of the chapters is good, as students can easily find them for future reference when studying or accessing Web data for term papers or assorted class projects. The level of writing is appropriate for students. I did not have a problem with any unrecognizable term, as each was clearly explained. I certainly believe the style and tone in each chapter is on a par with, and possibly superior to, Biagi. Before finalizing that judgement, however, I would want to read the entire text and get a feel for how it might be used as a substitute instructional aid.

8. Presentation, All Chapters. I believe professors evaluating the text will appreciate its framework, with boxes, top tens, and Web links. It is refreshing to get away from the monotony of texts that break down into all-too-familiar patterns. The Advertising and Public Relations chapters also give me new case studies by which I can energize student-led discussions (Page 40/The Great Pumpkin Mystery or Page 55/Soldier of Fortune). While my class is mostly lecture, these and other examples can expand student minds to examine critical issues in media that they may have never thought about before. Concepts are developed in adequate depth. I do not believe the discussion would be

confusing to students, nor do I feel that there is too much repetition or summation in the chapters. There are more than enough examples. Besides, professors will use these as jumping-off points to discuss local or regional examples and/or controversies that are on the Internet, Advertising or Public Relations.

9. History/Industry/Controversies Framework, All Chapters. I am biased in favor of such an approach. As I read the materials, especially with advertising, I realized I taught the course in a similar manner without realizing it. Students need to know the basics of media history before specifics, including controversies, can be discussed and analyzed. A separate industry section is essential because what we are dealing with is a business, something more professors need to emphasize. My guess is students will find the material beneficial if professors broach to them the importance of why the information in the chapters is broken down in such a manner. They would find it useful, yes.

10. Organization, All Chapters. They are easy to understand. Students would likely find it a good overall text to peruse, if the other chapters are as good as the three I have read. The sequencing is logical. Heads and subheads make sense for better student comprehension. I would say that materials here are at a slightly higher level of organization than Biagi, with fresher information and greater perspective on Internet issues, in particular.

11. Look to the Future Sections, All Chapters. What I like about these sections is that they tie in with what I already do in class. The final term paper in my course asks students to project what the future of mass communication will look like. For example, the end of the Advertising chapter discusses that the field will always be controversial. My students have postulated what future "controversies" would be in all advertising media. So I believe the author has the right idea by having such a section. Not to accurately gaze into the crystal ball, I would say, as much as make students think about what they may be discussing with their friends or family in the next generation.

12. Close Up on History, All Chapters. They are good at giving students much-needed historical perspectives on issues. Even in my case, I was unaware that the Internet began in 1969. Many of us knew of the terms "hypermedia" or "information superhighway" in the early 1990s, but little else until we were either wired for the Internet or received E-mail accounts. Will students find them useful...yes. Appealing...probably not. Some history may be perceived as dry or useless to them, regardless of subject matter. They are good for purposes of placing elements in their proper historical contexts.

Close Up on Industry, All Chapters. My response to these sections dovetail into what was just mentioned regarding history (and student perceptions).

Close Up on Controversy, All Chapters. Excellent ideas for the text, in my case, for student-led media roundtables of media events and their perspectives concerning them. I personally would not use the Pierre Salinger example as listed on pages 37-38. The only

controversy to me that could arise from the situation is how naive Salinger could be in taking unsubstantiated information from a Web source and claiming a government conspiracy. Controversy is a good idea for the text, but this example is weak. I would eliminate it from class discussion if the text was being used in my course. The Public Relations and Advertising examples were good, however.

13. Pedagogy, All Chapters. (A) Top Ten Preview Questions/Excellent way to start off chapters. It also stimulates student questions on subject matter and can start them thinking about how exam questions might be phrased. (B) Top Ten Lists/A shameless rip-off from Casey Kasem and David Letterman, but other texts do it too. The problem I have had with Biagi is that some lists are quickly outdated, especially those dealing with movie grosses, even though that is not one of the chapters evaluated here. ""Top Ten Dates" is a good instructional aid in terms of context and linear thought process for students. (C) End-of-chapter Summing Up/Fine in each, reminds me of Biagi, relevant for pre-exam study purposes. (D) End-of-chapter glossary/Again, similar to Biagi, not an item discussed much in my classes. Good for future in-depth study if necessary. (E) Web Excursions/Outstanding in each chapter! This is one of the BIG selling points that can be used for the book, making it easy and timely for student study and research. Extremely well-done, even though some of the URLs will likely change or be modified. The Longman Web site could take that into account, however, once the text is published. (F) Suggestions for Further Reading (annotated)/Appropriate. What I like is the detail, describing what specifically will be found in each reading. This is not always the case with similar introductory texts. (G) Suggested Web Sites (annotated)/Thorough in each, professors would likely students to perform additional searches depending upon what is being discussed in class lectures. (H) Suggested Films (annotated)/Relevant and timely. I would add one film to the Public Relations list, however. The title escapes me, but I believe it was produced in the late 1950s. Burt Lancaster plays a Walter Winchell-type gossip columnist, and Tony Curtis is a press agent who tries to get information or "spin" into Lancaster's column.

PART IV: Concluding Remarks

14. Overall Reaction. I really enjoyed the three chapters I read. The text has the potential (once I read it in its entirety) to be one of the major players in the introductory mass communication field. Many of the positive comments I have about the text have been mentioned in my responses. One of the strongest reasons for recommendation is the aspect of the Internet chapter, with its links and current, precise material on interactive communication. From what I have read, there is nothing to dissuade me from adopting it. It compares favorably with, and in some cases, surpasses, Biagi.

15. Supplements. My supplements primarily involve videotapes of historical and current media materials detailing issues and personalities. Students also subscribe to

Time during the semester. A specific videotape accompanying specific text materials would be a benefit to me and my class. Possibly a CD-ROM as well.

16. Adoption. I would seriously consider using this in my course based upon what I have read. It is well-written, well-organized, and loaded with information students can use to become perceptive analysts of mass communication.

Expert Review Questionnaire
(Internet Chapter)

1. Coverage. The chapter coverage is very accurate. The Contents sections is thorough at delineating what will be discussed, from Internet history to economics (very well-researched, by the way) to employment patterns, the latter of interest to students interested in cyber-careers. What I liked were all of the definitions of terms from pages 24-30. These are important for students to be aware of and understand. From my reading of the materials, I did not come across anything that was ambiguous, confusing, or questionable. My guess is, that with such growth in Internet stock value, more mention of this may be made in the final edit before publication. Material I mentioned in the preceding review did detail my questioning of some writing at the beginning of the chapter (Lewinsky matter, etc.)

2. Timely, Thorough. I am Web-savvy, and am quite knowledgeable in the field. To the best of my knowledge, information provided in the chapter is current. As mentioned above, this is one area that changes very quickly, so statistics or information that is current today must be updated before publication. The advantage today is that Longman can readily update any information on this or any other chapter at its Web site. The historical background is accurate, but a copy of the 1989 Tim Berners-Lee memo to his superiors (or a segment of it) would be as relevant as David Sarnoff's "Music Box Memo" in forecasting the future of interactive communication. It is a complete an effective a survey of the Internet as I have seen.

3. Other Topic Ideas For Chapter. Possibly -- how journalism has changed due to frequent updating, postings, and mistakes that can be made in a rush to "be first" to get information on the Internet to the public. The pre and post Impeachment story was the first major event to be addressed on the Internet. What are the long-term effects regarding ethical journalistic behavior? How will the increased use of video and audio affect Internet usage? Are we becoming an information-rich versus an information-poor society? Are minorities being left behind in usage of the Internet? How does E-Commerce affect or work with traditional business philosophies? How will state or

national political campaigns change through use of Web sites? How does the Internet affect American and international culture? I realize some of these areas are covered in the chapter, but these questions frame a good theoretical backdrop for classroom discussion through text usage.

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MCOM 1003: Introduction to Mass Communication (Academic Course Syllabus Preface)

Grading Criteria: There are a total of 500 points that can be earned from this course. Semester grades will be determined in the following manner: 450-500/A; 400-449/B; 350-399/C; 300-349/D; and 0-299/F.

Assignments: The following tasks are required. Each term paper will be five pages in length, typed, double-spaced, with a separate reference page. **Two missed term papers will result in automatic failure.**

Term Paper 1/Due Sep. 15/Television News Content and Analysis: 50 points

Term Paper 2/Due Oct. 15/Movie Review: 50 points

Term Paper 3/Due Nov. 12/Cross-Media Advertising Demographic Profile: 50 points

Term Paper 4/Due Dec. 10/Future of Mass Communication: 50 points

Media Quizzes 1-4/Topics, Individuals Making News: 15 points each/60 total

Exams 1-4/Text, Lecture, Discussion, Videotapes: 50 points each/200 total

Attendance/Class Participation: 40 points

Fall 1999 Semester Total: 500 points

SOUTHERN ARKANSAS UNIVERSITY
ACADEMIC COURSE SYLLABUS

Prepared by: James E. Reppert **Revised by:** _____ **Date:** _____

Title and Number: MCOM 1003/Intro. to Mass Communication

Prerequisite(s): None

Catalog Description: Development of communication media in American society, including newspapers, magazines, radio, television, and movies. Emphasis on social, political, and economic interaction of media and society.

Text: Biagi, Media/Impact (third edition), Wadsworth; Subscription to Time Magazine

Purpose/Objective: Students need to become critical analysts of American and international media, and learn the many techniques used to gain their attention and consumer dollars via print, broadcast and related outlets. By examining each segment of mass communication, besides its history and major contributors, they can obtain an overall picture of how American culture has formed. Of particular relevance is the significant impact television has had upon the world, and videotapes detailing mass communication issues and personalities help to bring that importance into focus.

Topics To Be Emphasized	Approximate Hours Of Coverage
An overview of mass communication	3
Interactive communication	3
Newspapers	3
Magazines	3
Books	3
Radio	3
Recording industry	3
Television	6
Movies	3
Advertising	3
Public relations	3
Ownership, legal and regulatory issues, media ethics	6
Researching data in cyberspace	6

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SAU ACADEMIC COURSE SYLLABUS - 2

Title and Number: MCOM 1003/Intro. to Mass Communication

Check types of teaching strategies used in this course:

X Lecture
X Lecture/Discussion
X Use of Audio-Visuals
X Demonstration
_____ Field Trips
X Resource Persons
X Student Participation
_____ Team Teaching
_____ Microteaching
X Other: Videotapes

Major Student Assignments: Four term papers, four media quizzes, four exams, attendance/class participation.

Student Assessment/Evaluation (Tests and Number of Tests):

X True/False
X Multiple Choice
X Short Answer
X Essay
_____ Criterion reference
_____ Standardized
X Demonstration
X Term Papers
_____ Exhibits
_____ Critiques
_____ Projects
_____ Other: _____

Student Readings: (please attach)

Instructor Bibliography: (please attach)

Procedure:

Submit three copies to departmental chair

Department Chair (Sig./Date) _____

Chair submits two copies to Dean (Sig./Date) _____

Dean submits one copy to VPAA (Sig./Date) _____

"Search Strategies in Mass Communication" (3rd edition)
Review Questionnaire

1. About the course. I would use this text for use in Broadcast Journalism 3103/Broadcast News Writing. It is a course taught each odd-numbered spring semester at Southern Arkansas University (1999, 2001, etc.) If accepted, it would serve as a supplementary text to "The Broadcast News Process" (3rd edition) from Morton Publishing in Denver. I could also use it for Broadcast Journalism 4903/Senior Research Project. This course requires students to write a 20 page paper on a major theme in broadcasting, or involve themselves with a special broadcast-related project. I like the text because it is flexible enough in its methodology to be used in a variety of courses, possibly even outside mass communication depending on the particular curriculum of a liberal arts institution. As far as enrollment is concerned, BJ 3103/Broadcast News Writing usually has an enrollment of roughly 15-20 students, while BJ 4903/Senior Research Project, conducted on a TBA basis outside regular classroom hours, usually has 3-4 students each semester (Fall/Spring), with 1-2 each Summer session.

2. Writing Style. I have no complaints with the writing style of the authors. It is clear, precise, well-organized and structured, with excellent real-world examples for students to analyze and emulate. It is rich with information that students can use regarding interviewing, searching for relevant, timely information, and using data to allow a greater audience understanding of news stories. The style of reading, while it may come across as a bit dry for students, is nevertheless important for them in terms of knowing how to find, use, and interpret information as journalists. My upper-class students would like the text because of the way it systematically gives them strategies (hence the book's title) and formulae to place events in their proper perspective. Younger students might not like it because it isn't flashy with graphics or large text boxes. My guess is that at my institution, if I used the text, primarily seniors would use it as an information resource tool, with the reading level appropriate for them.

3. Topic Coverage. Even though I have not used this type of text in my particular instructional sequence, I do believe topic coverage would be more than adequate for the two courses I described in my response to the first review question. From my perspective, information presented in the text is current and timely, and least up to this 1997 3rd edition. Obviously, updated Internet information would make some of the text

outdated to a degree, primarily because technological changes quickly make recent statistics or analyses obsolete. Exhaustive would be my way to describe how Ward and Hansen cover information gathering. This is vital in an increasingly litigious world of journalism. Knowing how and where to research, document and cite sources is more important today than ever. I cannot think of any specific topics I would include in terms of coverage. The manner in which topics are organized and discussed is fine, with no need to eliminate or reduce anything. An overall freshening of topic material will suffice.

4. Text Organization. Organizational structure is outstanding. It is a thorough, substantive read that is a must for current and future journalists to examine. It covers searching, library usage, electronic information, interviewing and social responsibility in much the same order that I use when teaching BJ 3103/Broadcast News Writing. As a result, I would not rearrange information unless the authors felt new or updated chapter information would best be synthesized in a slightly different fashion. The organization needs little improvement.

5. Comparison With Similar Texts. I know of no other text that deals with search strategies in such a comprehensive way. I believe that is why I am so impressed with the text. I want to institute it in my curriculum as a result of reviewing it. For years, I have been looking for just the right text for students to use in BJ 4903/Senior Research Project. My guess is the new 4th edition of Ward and Hansen will finally fit that bill for me with its thoroughness and clarity of instructional approach. I would also say the competition would have a lot to be concerned with from what I have read. Since I have seen no other text quite like this, I would say it distinguished itself in a unique way.

6. Personal Views On Adoption. Yes, I would be inclined to adopt the new 4th edition of *Search Strategies in Mass Communication*. I think what sold me on it was the thorough investigative approach of source documentation in the Schwan story on pages 343-358. When I read it, I was thinking what a wonderful example it was for students to read, hence realizing the absolute importance of precise, thorough, and accurate documentation in news stories. The Electronic Information and Interviewing chapters are helpful, also. My students produce weekly university-based television and radio shows seen and heard by tens of thousands in Arkansas and Texas. These types of research tools could only assist their reportorial abilities. No changes would have to be made for me to adopt it, other than the regular freshening that would take place before the 4th edition was published.

7. Topics Currently Being Discussed -- Additional Review Comments. Obviously, the Internet and its phenomenal growth is attracting the most interest. However, information provided in the text makes it clear that there are innumerable ways to hunt and gather documentation in the field of mass communication. In terms of additional comments, I would say that the Ward and Hansen text can be used in a variety of mass communication curricula, including courses at the graduate level (where it is probably

used). As someone who teaches strictly undergraduate broadcast journalism courses, it is a one-stop repository of essential information students can use throughout their journalistic careers.

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BJ 3103: Broadcast News Writing (Academic Course Syllabus Preface)

Grading Criteria: There are a total of 500 points that can be earned from this course. Semester grades will be determined in the following manner: 450-500/A; 400-449/B; 350-399/C; 300-349/D; and 0-299/F.

Assignments: The following tasks are required. Unless otherwise noted, all broadcast script exercises will be typed and double-spaced, with all capital letters on 65-space lines. **Three missed writing assignments will result in automatic failure.**

Assignments 1-35/Radio, Television News Stories: 10 points each/350 total

Producing and Hosting **The SAU Report**: 50 points

Writing and Recording Assignments for **SAU Magazine**: 50 points

Attendance/Class Participation: 50 points

Spring 2001 Semester Total: 500 points

SOUTHERN ARKANSAS UNIVERSITY
ACADEMIC COURSE SYLLABUS

Prepared by: James E. Reppert **Revised by:** _____ **Date:** _____

Title and Number: **BJ 3103/Broadcast News Writing**

Prerequisite(s): PJ 2003/Basic News Writing

Catalog Description: Writing assignments include leads, hard news, features, spot news, investigative reports, and editorials. Also stressed are news sources, accuracy, ethics, and broadcast law.

Text: Shook/Lattimore/Redmond, The Broadcast News Process (fifth edition), Morton

Purpose/Objective: Those seriously interested in broadcast journalism as a career must consider the importance of accurate, well-written news in a field stressing immediacy and intense competition. Understanding news gathering fundamentals and being able to work on tight deadlines is not for everyone, and the field is not as glorious as it may appear on the surface. Realizing that practice hones professional reporting skills, many assignments similar to what students will face in the job market are emphasized. Students leave the course with a better grasp as to what is news, besides reporting the facts in a tight, conversational writing style.

Topics To Be Emphasized	**Approximate Hours Of Coverage**
Writing in present tense	6
Broadcast leads	3
News selection, elements of news	6
Reporting on a deadline, source attribution	3
Editing, freshening, updating news copy	3
Hard, feature news	3
Editorials, press releases	3
Commercials, weather	3
Preparing lab assignments	9
Researching data in cyberspace	3
Ethics of broadcast news reporting	3
Preparing final project	3

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SAU ACADEMIC COURSE SYLLABUS - 2

Title and number: BJ 3103/Broadcast News Writing

Check types of teaching strategies used in this course:

X Lecture
X Lecture/Discussion
X Use of Audio-Visuals
X Demonstration
_____ Field Trips
X Resource Persons
X Student Participation
_____ Team Teaching
_____ Microteaching
X Other: Videotapes/Audiocassettes

Major Student Assignments: Thirty-five writing assignments, producing and hosting **The SAU Report**, writing and recording assignments for **SAU Magazine**, attendance/class participation.

Student Assessment/Evaluation (Tests and Number of Tests):

_____ True/False
_____ Multiple Choice
_____ Short Answer
_____ Essay
_____ Criterion reference
_____ Standardized
X Demonstration
_____ Term Papers
_____ Exhibits
X Critiques
X Projects
_____ Other: _____

Student Readings: (please attach)

Instructor Bibliography: (please attach)

Procedure:

Submit three copies to departmental chair

Department Chair (Sig./Date) _____

Chair submits two copies to Dean (Sig./Date) _____

Dean submits one copy to VPAA (Sig./Date) _____

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BJ 4903: Senior Research Project (Academic Course Syllabus Preface)

Grading Criteria: There are a total of 100 points that can be earned from this course. Semester grades will be determined in the following manner: 90-100/A; 80-89/B; 70-79/C; 60-69/D; and 0-59/F.

Assignments: The following tasks are required. Each term paper chapter will be five pages in length, typed, double-spaced, with a separate reference page. **One missed term paper chapter will result in automatic failure.**

Term Paper/Chapter 1: 20 points

Term Paper/Chapter 2: 20 points

Term Paper/Chapter 3: 20 points

Term Paper/Chapter 4: 20 points

Oral Defense of Completed Project: 20 points

Fall 1999, Spring 2000 Semester Total: 100 points

SOUTHERN ARKANSAS UNIVERSITY
ACADEMIC COURSE SYLLABUS

Prepared by: James E. Reppert **Revised by:** _____ **Date:** _____

Title and Number: BJ 4903/Senior Research Project

Prerequisite(s): Senior standing and 30 hours of broadcast journalism emphasis requirements

Catalog Description: A major research paper in the student's area of expertise, which adds a significant knowledge to the discipline. Must also defend the paper orally.

Text: Eisenthal, A Step-by-Step Guide to Research and Writing Papers (first edition), NTC

Purpose/Objective: Students write a paper which combines quantitative and qualitative research skills in an area of broadcast journalism/mass communication which ties in with their career goals.

Topics To Be Emphasized	**Approximate Hours Of Coverage**
Topic selection/significance	8
Work with advisor on format/research data base	8
Execution of term paper in four chapters	20
Regular critiques of paper and research	8
Oral defense of paper	4

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SAU ACADEMIC COURSE SYLLABUS - 2

Title and number: BJ 4903/Senior Research Project

Check types of teaching strategies used in this course:

_____ Lecture
_____ Lecture/Discussion
_____ Use of Audio-Visuals
_____ Demonstration
_____ Field Trips
X Resource Persons
X Student Participation
_____ Team Teaching
_____ Microteaching
_____ Other: _____

Major Student Assignments: Term paper on a major broadcast journalism theme consisting of four chapters, with progress reports at regular intervals, concluding with an oral defense of the completed project.

Student Assessment/Evaluation (Tests and Number of Tests):

_____ True/False
_____ Multiple Choice
_____ Short Answer
_____ Essay
_____ Criterion reference
_____ Standardized
_____ Demonstration
X Term Papers
_____ Exhibits
_____ Critiques
X Projects
_____ Other: _____

Student Readings: (please attach)

Instructor Bibliography: (please attach)

Procedure:

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Department Chair (Sig./Date) _____

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